

## CLAIMS

Therefore, having thus described the invention, at least the following is claimed:

1           1.       A communications system, comprising:  
2                 at least one communication suite, each communication suite comprising:  
3                     at least one communications account of a first communications  
4       service; and  
5                     a type, wherein the type may be designated as a child-type;  
6                 first user interface of the first communications service configured to:  
7                     provide at least one first operation that is restricted to be performed by  
8       a user of a particular communication suite having the type of child-type; and  
9                     detect the particular communication suite that is attempting to perform  
10       the at least one first operation;  
11                 first logic configured to:  
12                     determine the type of the particular communication suite after the first  
13       user interface detects the particular communication suit attempting to perform the at  
14       least one first operation; and  
15                     relay the type of the particular communication suite to the first user  
16       interface,  
17                     wherein the first user interface performs the particular operation if the  
18       type is not a child-type.

1           2.       The system of claim 1, wherein each communication suite comprises a  
2       password, the first user interface further configured to perform the particular operation  
3       if the user of the particular communication suite provides the password for the  
4       particular communication suite.

1           3.       The system of claim 1, wherein the first operation involves accessing a  
2       particular folder containing communication messages.

1           4.       The system of claim 1, wherein the first operation involves accessing at  
2       least one configurable setting of the first communication service.

1           5.       The system of claim 1, wherein the first operation involves accessing at  
2       least one configurable setting of the first user interface.

1           6.       The system of claim 1, the first user interface further configured to  
2       provide at least one second operation that is exclusively performed for the user of the  
3       particular communication suite having the type designated as child-type.

1           7.       The system of claim 6, the at least one second operation being  
2       performed automatically by the first user interface, wherein the at least one second  
3       operation is the storage of a communication message intended for the user in a folder  
4       of a different user.

1           8.       The system of claim 1, wherein:  
2       each communication suite further comprises at least one display setting, at  
3       least one folder setting, and at least one message setting; and  
4       the first user interface comprises:  
5               a display area for displaying a particular communication message;  
6               a folder list for organizing a plurality of communications messages,  
7       wherein the at least one first operation comprises:  
8               configuring the display area according to the at least one display  
9       setting;  
10              configuring the folder list according to the at least one folder setting;  
11       and  
12              filtering the plurality of communications messages according to  
13       the at least one message setting.

1           9.       The system of claim 8, wherein a first communication suite of the  
2       child-type operates independently of a second communication suite of the child-type.

1           10.     A system for providing child protection in communications services,  
2 comprising:

3                 means for creating a child persona of communications services having at least  
4 one communications account for a communications service associated with the child  
5 persona, wherein the child persona is intended to be used by a child; and

6                 means for restricting a first operation from being performed by a user who is  
7 using the at least one communications account of the child persona.

1           11.     The system of claim 10, further comprising:  
2                 means for allowing a second operation to be exclusively performed by a user  
3 who is using at least one communications account of the child persona.

1           12.     The system of claim 11, wherein the second operation involves storing  
2 a communication message that is intended for the user of the child persona to a folder  
3 of an adult user.

1           13.     The system of claim 10, further comprising:  
2                 means for detecting if the user of the at least one communications account has  
3 requested to perform the first operation;  
4                 means for requesting for a proof of authorization from the user to perform the  
5 first operation after detection, and  
6                 means for performing the first operation if the proof of authorization is  
7 received.

1           14.     The system of claim 13, wherein the proof of authorization involves a  
2 password created by an adult user and provided by the user upon request.

1           15.     The system of claim 10, wherein the first operation involves accessing  
2 a particular folder containing communication messages.

1           16.     The system of claim 15, wherein the communication messages are  
2 messages that have been determined to be undesirable for the user.

1           17.     The system of claim 10, wherein the first operation involves accessing  
2     at least one configurable setting of the communications service.

1           18.     The system of claim 10, wherein a first child persona operates  
2     independently of a second child persona.

1           19.     A method for providing child protection in communications services,  
2     comprising the step of:  
3                 creating a child persona of communications services having at least one  
4     communications account for a communications service associated with the child  
5     persona, wherein the child persona is intended to be used by a child; and  
6                 restricting a first operation from being performed by a user who is using the at  
7     least one communications account of the child persona.

1           20.     The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of:  
2                 allowing a second operation to be exclusively performed by a user who is  
3     using at least one communications account of the child persona.

1           21.     The method of claim 20, wherein the second operation involves storing  
2     a communication message that is intended for the user of the child persona to a folder  
3     of an adult user.

1           22.     The method of claim 19, the restricting step further comprising the  
2     steps of:  
3                 detecting if the user of the at least one communications account has requested  
4     to perform the first operation;  
5                 after detection, requesting for a proof of authorization from the user to perform  
6     the first operation, and  
7                 performing the first operation if the proof of authorization is received.

1           23.     The method of claim 19, wherein the proof of authorization involves a  
2     password created by an adult and provided by the user upon request.

1           24.     The method of claim 19, wherein the first operation involves accessing  
2     a particular folder containing communication messages.

1           25.     The method of claim 24, wherein the communication messages are  
2     messages that have been determined to be undesirable for the user.

1           26.     The method of claim 19, wherein the first operation involves accessing  
2     at least one configurable setting of the communications service.

1           27.     The system of claim 19, wherein a first communication suite of the  
2     child-type operates independently of a second communication suite of the child-type.